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# Dedication to Senator John D. Rockefeller IV

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## WEST VIRGINIA LAW REVIEW

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### DEDICATION TO SENATOR JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER IV

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*"I know that West Virginians' struggles with the health care system are not unique in America, but they are unique to me, and they are what drive me to work so hard to make things better." Senator Jay Rockefeller*

The editors and staff of Volume 113 of the *West Virginia Law Review* dedicate this special issue, *Health Care in America*, to United States Senator John D. Rockefeller IV. Currently serving his fifth consecutive term in the United States Senate, Senator Rockefeller is arguably one of the institution's most influential members. As a champion of bipartisan reform, the members of the *West Virginia Law Review* chose to honor Senator Rockefeller's life-long commitment to health policy with this special dedication.

Senator Rockefeller's commitment to health care began at an early age. In the 1960s, he worked as a young VISTA volunteer in the town of Emmons, West Virginia. The experience shaped his fundamental belief that access to affordable health care should be a right, not a privilege.

While serving in the United States Senate, Senator Rockefeller continued to advocate for comprehensive health care reform. As part of his effort, Senator Rockefeller has argued that the American health care system must include dignified end of life care, a vital health care safety net of Medicare and Medicaid, and a real commitment to finding cures for diseases such as cancer and Alzheimer's.

Throughout his career, Senator Rockefeller has consistently stressed the importance of bipartisan reform. In the 1980s, he chaired the blue-ribbon Bipartisan Commission on Comprehensive Health Care Reform, a panel later known as "The Pepper Commission." The Pepper Commission developed a number of recommendations addressing the growing health care crisis in America, including the threat of long-term care issues facing baby boomers and their parents.

In addition to the Pepper Commission, Senator Rockefeller also served as the chairman of the National Commission on Children, a panel that examined federal programs aimed at improving the overall well-being of children. Under his leadership, the National Commission on Children became a model for bipartisan lawmaking on children's education, welfare, and other health care issues. Later, Senator Rockefeller played a leading role in creating

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the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) which has given millions of low-income children, including thousands in West Virginia children, the chance to start out healthy in life.

Today, Senator Rockefeller serves as the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee's Subcommittee on Health Care and the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. Senator Rockefeller also serves as the founder and honorary chairman of the Alliance for Health Reform, a nonpartisan, nonprofit group dedicated to providing opinion leaders with an unbiased source of information to understand the roots of the nation's health care problems and the trade-offs posed by competing proposals for change.

It is our privilege to dedicate this special issue, *Health Care in America*, to Senator John D. Rockefeller IV.

*Lee Adair Sparks*

*Editor-in-Chief*

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